

love, and we must. But we can't make people love one another. That comes from institutions that rely upon a greater power; that comes from churches and synagogues and mosques. It comes from mentoring programs based upon the idea of some soul, some good, decent American saying, "What can I do to help make my society a better place?"

I love coming outside the Nation's Capital, because it gives me a chance to see Americans line the road, saluting the institution of the Presidency as I drive by. And it reminds me every time, every trip, that the strength of this country lies not in the halls of our Government; the strength of this country lies in the hearts and souls of the citizens of the greatest land on the face of the Earth.

I think we're making progress. We understand where the power of this country lays. It lays in the hearts and souls of Americans. It must lay in our pocketbooks. It lays in the willingness for people to work hard. But as importantly, it lays in the fact that we've got citizens from all walks of life, all political parties, that are willing to

say, "I want to love my neighbor. I want to make somebody's life just a little bit better." And for those of you who are doing that, I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

And thank you for your warm welcome, and God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:55 a.m. in the gymnasium. In his remarks, he referred to Austin Obasohan, principal, and Graham Boone, student council president, Concord Middle School; Phillip J. Kirk, Jr., chairman, North Carolina State Board of Education; Mayor Patrick McCrory of Charlotte, NC; Mayor George W. Liles of Concord; Michael E. Ward, superintendent, North Carolina Public Schools; and Speaker of the House James B. Black and Senate President Pro Tempore Marc Basnight, North Carolina State Assembly. The President also referred to Title I of the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (Public Law No. 103-382), which amended Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (Public Law No. 89-10).

Remarks in a Meeting With the Parents of Petty Officer Third Class Steven Blocher in Concord

April 11, 2001

The President. I'm so honored that the Blocher family came to say hello. Obviously, when we were going to visit, we were just going to visit in a quiet way, a private way. Now that their son, Steven, will be coming home soon, I thought it would be appropriate for us to visit, and then visit some with the press.

These good folks are patriots, as is their son. It's a patriotic family. We had other family members served our country. Steven was one of the 24. I know they're thrilled he's coming home. But I'm so appreciative of how this family and the other families

were steadfast in their patriotism and loyalty. They raised a boy who loves his country, and we owe a debt of gratitude to not only the service men and women but to their parents, as well. So that's why I wanted to see you.

Robert Blocher. This morning worked out even better than we had hoped. It's an honor to meet the President, but to meet the President under such happy circumstances was more than we could ask the Lord for in any way.

The President. It's my honor to have you all. Thanks. We're watching very carefully.

Progress is being made, and that's very good news for this group of folks.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:40 p.m. at Concord Middle School during a meeting with Robert and Sandra Blocher. Petty Officer Third Class Steven Blocher was one of 24 crewmembers of the U.S. Navy EP-3E

Aries II electronic surveillance aircraft held by the Government of China after the aircraft made an emergency landing on China's Hainan Island due to a mid-air collision with a Chinese F-8 fighter jet over the South China Sea on March 31. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks to the Community in Greenville, North Carolina April 11, 2001

The President. Thank you all. Thank you very much. Okay. Richard, thank you very much for your kind hospitality. I'm proud—I am proud to be an honorary member of the East Carolina baseball team. I am proud to be on this campus. I am proud to be in East Carolina, and I'm proud I've got so many friends in this great State.

It is such an honor to be here, and I want to thank you all for coming. I understand that some good folks spent the night last night here to be here. I promise not to speak so long so you will fall asleep. [Laughter] But I'm really thankful that you're here. I'm thankful to be out of Washington, DC, with the good, hard-working people of this part of our country.

Release of U.S. Navy Aircraft Crewmembers in China

I'm pleased to report that a commercial charter airplane is close to landing in Hainan Island.

Audience members. U.S.A! U.S.A! U.S.A!

The President. The plane is expected to leave that island in a couple of hours, bound for Guam and then for Hawaii. Earlier today I had the privilege and honor to meet fellow North Carolinians Bob and Sandra Blocher, the parents of one of the 24 crewmembers, Petty Officer Third Class Steven Blocher. They are, of course, as you can imagine, thrilled to know that the service men and women are returning home.

These have been difficult days for all the families. And these days are a reminder of the sacrifices all our men and women in uniform and their family make every single day for freedom. And so we're proud and thankful for the service of folks. We're proud and thankful for their parents, and we can't wait for them to get home.

Greenville, North Carolina

I am pleased to be here with the senior Senator from the great State of North Carolina.

Audience members. Jesse! Jesse! Jesse!

The President. He's a strong ally in the United States Senate.

Audience member. Big time!

The President. I am pleased to be here—quit quoting the Vice President. The man yelled, "Big time." [Laughter]

I am pleased to be here with your Congressman, Walter Jones, as well as Congressmen from around your State, Howard Coble, Robin Hayes, Charles Taylor.

Let me tell you—now, you all may be aware that I laid out a budget recently. I like to call it the people's budget because it says, first and foremost, in Washington we understand that we're not spending the Government's money; we are spending the people's money. And the five people I just introduced stood strong with the people of North Carolina when they voted for a responsible budget. I can't say that was the